

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 227012

STADIS/////////
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM NEA/ARN, DRAPER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SY, US

SUBJECT: SYRIAN JEWRY

REF: DAMASCUS 5971, 5975

1. I HOPE IT WASN'T ME WHO GAVE PELLETREAU IMPRESSION THAT WE WOULD RECOMMEND PRESIDENT RAISE ISSUE OF FURTHER MARRIAGE PROPOSALS WITH KHADDAM. WITH OUR PRINCIPALS WE WOULD RECOMMEND AGAINST RAISING ISSUE, BUT WILL PROVIDE BACKGROUND PAPER ON CURRENT STATUS OF SITUATION FOR THE REMOTE POSSIBILITY THAT KHADDAM HIMSELF MIGHT MENTION ISSUE.

2. VELIOTES AND I HAD MEETING WITH SOLARZ AND MEMBERS OF JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS LAST WEEK. WE STRESSED--AS YOU HAVE IN RECENT CABLES--THAT NO RPT NO MOVEMENT ON NEW PROPOSALS OR ANY OTHER EMIGRATION POSSIBLY COULD TAKE PLACE UNTIL THE
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PAGE 02 STATE 227012

SYRIANS HAVE DECIDED WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE SYRIAN JEWS WHO HAD VISITED ISRAEL.

3. SHALOM AND CHABOT ARE RELUCTANT TO CONDUCT MARRIAGES WHICH MIGHT LATER BE ANNULLED. SINCE THE COUPLES AFTER SUCH MARRIAGES WOULD NOT BE LIVING TOGETHER, IT SOON WOULD BE AN OPEN SECRET AS TO WHAT REALLY WAS HAPPENING AND THE WORD

INEVITABLY WOULD FILTER BACK TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN SYRIA AND THUS TO SYRIAN AUTHORITIES. THERE IS ONE POSSIBILITY THAT A GENUINE ROMANCE IS DEVELOPING WITH ONE GIRL, AND SHALOM IS OF COURSE ENCOURAGING THIS DEVELOPMENT. HE HAS EXTRACTED ADEQUATE PROMISES THAT NONE OF THE GIRLS WILL TRY TO VISIT ISRAEL. THE ISRAELI EMBASSY AND CONGEN ARE COOPERATING IN THIS RESPECT.

4. YOU WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS ALL THESE MATTERS WITH SOLARZ AND SHALOM ON MONDAY NIGHT, SEPT. 26.

5. SOLARZ AND COMPANY ASK THAT EMBASSY URGE TOUTAH TO PROVIDE THE LISTS OF THE HOLDERS OF IRANIAN PASSPORTS. ALSO, THEY WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF SOME KIND OF INTERNAL CENSUS COULD BE TAKEN OF COMMUNITY TO DETERMINE WHICH SYRIAN JEWS HOLD PASSPORTS FROM MEXICO, SPAIN, AND FRANCE, AMONG OTHER POSSIBILITIES. HIAS HAD DEVELOPED ARRANGEMENTS WITH THESE GOVERNMENTS IN THE PAST AND WOULD LIKE TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES IF THERE ARE ANY CONNECTIONS WITH THESE THREE GOVERNMENTS.

6. SHALOM AND COMPANY HAVE READIED SOME 35 NEW PETITIONS, OF WHICH 29 ARE FOR MARRIAGES, THREE INVOLVE STUDENT HELP, AND ONE INVOLVES A FAMILY REUNION. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THE DIFFICULTIES AHEAD, WE ASKED THAT THE PETITIONS BE SENT TO ME AS SOON AS THEY ARE READY, AND WE WILL MOVE FOR-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 227012

WARD. WE POINTED OUT THAT TOUTAH WOULD NOT PRESENT THEM TO THE SYRIANS UNTIL HE FELT THAT THE SCENE WAS FAVORABLE.

7. RE THE HINTS THAT SHALOM MIGHT BE ARRESTED OR KICKED OUT IF HE WENT TO SYRIA, SHALOM SAID THAT A COLONEL MOHAMMED AL-SHA'AL (PHONETIC) HAD TRIED TO REACH HIM BY TELEPHONE UNSUCCESSFULLY. THE COLONEL IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS A MEMBER OF A SYRIAN PURCHASING MISSION IN NEW YORK. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS ABOUT SUCH A COLONEL? I KNOW OF NO PURCHASING MISSION, BUT DELIBERATELY DECIDED NOT TO ASK SYRIAN EMBASSY HERE.

8. SHALOM ASSURES ME, AND YOU MAY TELL TOUTAH, THAT EVERY EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO SPEED THE PAYMENTS. APPARENTLY FEB. AND MARCH PAYMENTS WERE NOT RECEIVED FOR A LONG TIME ALTHOUGH APRIL, MAY, AND JUNE ARRIVED. HE HAS GONE ALL OUT TO GET THINGS IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS THIS WEEK. VANCE

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